SOME UNRECOGNIZED SYRIAN AMARNA LETTERS
(EA 260, 317, 318)

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I

PROFESSOR I. J. GELB, in his article on the early history of the West Semitic peoples,¹ discussing the atypical occurrences of $\dot{\alpha}$ instead of $\ddot{o}$ in certain Amarna documents from Palestine, pointed out that, because of the completely arbitrary grouping of EA 317 and 318 with (Southern) Palestinian Amarna letters, there is nothing to be derived from the writing of the name of the sender as Dagān-takala, in place of *Dagān-takala. Indeed, Knudtzon, contrary to his custom, gives no clear reason for this placement of the Dagān-takala letters in Southwest Palestine.² One may suppose that the reason was the high standing of Dagān in Southwest Palestine as reflected in the Books of Judges and I Samuel and also the mention of the Suteans in EA 297:16 (Gezer), which apparently impressed Knudtzon as similar to their role in EA 318:13 (see Section II, b). Moreover, although Knudtzon stressed the paleographic identity of the Dagān-takala letters with EA 260² (the third document of the proposed group under discussion), he separated it from them and placed it with the Ba‘alu-miḥir letters (EA 257–259; see Section II, a). It must be stressed here at once that, as to the statement on the paleographic identity, we lean almost entirely on the universally recognized and admired reputation of Knudtzon, because EA 260 has not yet been published in cuneiform.³

On the other hand, there are further data, to be presented in the following section, showing, convincingly I hope, that these three letters form one group to be placed in connection with the Syrian Amarna documents.

Coming back now to the statement of Professor Gelb, we are already on the move northward, even if the CV–VC writing of the divine name (DN) Dagān as Da-ga-an i.o. Da-gan does not prove definitely a possible Amurrite pronunciation, because it could be considered as one of the “standard” forms of this DN, and perhaps exclusively so.⁴

II

I should like to present the above-mentioned further data, selected from the material of a Hebrew edition of the Amarna documents, now in preparation.

(a) Personal names (PN) (see re-transliterated texts of the proposed group, Appendix I, p. 170).

Both PN have focal Mesopotamian–Syrian area background.

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² EA, pp. 1320–21, 1348–1349, 1609; BA, IV (1899), 321 (In EA, p. 1320, a "?" was appended to EA 260); cf. also note 21 and Kupper, Nomades, p. 100.  
³ EA, p. 15 ("Oppert Tablet"); from this tablet only two signs were published; cf. Section II, f.  
As to the name Dagān-takala: while this is the only instance of the occurrence of the DN Dagān in the Amarna letters, the position of Dagān in Mesopotamia and Syria (and, no doubt, to a smaller degree already in Palestine but without connection to our present case) is clear.\(^5\) Moreover, the verbal element takala represents an originally old Akkadian name type.\(^6\)

Still more significant is the other PN, Balumer, a unique northwest-Semitic PN containing the "appellative or theophoric element" ba'lu\(^7\) and the DN of the ancient Mesopotamian god Mer,\(^8\) known also in Amarna-age Ugarit,\(^9\) and in the late middle-Assyrian inscription of King Tukulti-Mer of Mari and Ḥana.\(^10\) This deity retained a central position in the pantheon of Aramean Ḥamat (early eighth century): its King Zakur was saved by ṣ-war\(^11\). Moreover, in these personal names we recognize a well-known "pair" of Mesopotamian deities: Dagān, worshiped in the upper and middle Euphrates area, and Itūr-Mer, the protective deity of old-Babylonian Mari (and Ḥana).\(^12\)

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\(^{6}\) MAD 3\(^\circ\), 295; MAD 2\(^\circ\), 146–53, 216, Gelb, Kuryłowicz FS, pp. 72 f.; APNM, pp. 87 f. (negative results in NWS PN's: pp. 89 f.)

\(^{7}\) APNM, pp. 100, 174; meaning: "the lord (is)..."; note the orthoigraphic variants! Cf. nn. 8 and 13.

\(^{8}\) (I thank my colleague Professor H. Tadmor, who pointed out to me the possibility of the presence of the DN Mer in the PN Balumer). The wind-god Wer/Mer (APNM, p. 272, with lit.): Earliest samples of the phonetic writing of this DN: MAD 3\(^\circ\), 180; (Wer ; Mer) cf. op. cit., pp. 27–28; when written with m, the initial grapheme is always mer-, except in our PN Balumer (mi-ir) and Ug.-Akk. PN In-mer-ir, cf. n. 9. As its chief compound serves the theophorous appellative Illu-, see already in op. cit. above; of special interest is the name of one of the "fathers" of Samāš-Adad I, Dingir me-er, AKL, I, 15, 16, (normalized Ilu-Mer), because of its setting in a NWS PN surrounding (Landsberger, JCS, VIII [1954], 33, note 16). DN of identical appearance (Ilu)-mer is included as a (variant) equivalent of (d)em (=Adad etc.; see below) in the Babylonian canonical lexical series Anum, see the material collected by Ebeling in RLA, I, 23 and Deimel, SL, IV. 1 (1950), No. 721 (with KAV material). Identification with (original) ilu-er (cf. n. 11) and thus the recognition of an univocalic sequence in this DN was noted already by Dhorme, RA, VIII (1911), 97.

The wind-god Wer/Mer is identified, like many other similar gods within the cuneiform-writing civilization and on its boundaries with (d)em (=Adad, etc.; see directly: Klingen, JCS, XIX, [1965] 87–93). For our purpose it is to be especially noted that the now known relationship between Bēl and Ḥd in Ugarit (cf.: Gordon UT, Glossary 749; PRU III Repertoire, p. 238 ff. passim; PN's with (d)em): is recorded in CT XXV, 17, 32;

\(^{9}\) (d) Bā-u-i-ru, MIN (=d)em, cf. pl. 16, 1). This equation concludes the "syllogism" between the Mesopotamian and NWS area: A(Mer) = B(Adad) B(Adad) = C(Bal) A(Mer) = *C(Bal). Thus the position of the element balu- (cf. n. 7), uniquely compounded with DN Mer but well used with other DN's, would be more understandable; cf. also n. 13.

In this connection it might be recalled that on the basis of relationship between the DN's IIu-ur-Mer and (d)Mer, J. Lewy postulates DN *Tēr (=d)ĕr[i] from DN II-teri (personal god of Nabunaid); see HUCA, XIX (1945–46), 428.

\(^{10}\) PRU III. 16.249;14 (p. 97): Ṣ-rā-im / Ṣ-ra-er; cf. orthography of PN Balumer; cf. nn 7, 8, 13.

\(^{11}\) Pinches, TSBA, VIII (1985), 3; Thureau-Dangin and Dhorme, Syria, 5 (1924), 279–80; Weidner, An., Or., 12 (1935), 336–38: (1) Tukul-ti-mer-

\(^{12}\) Donner-Röllig, Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften\(^1\) (Wiesbaden, 1964), Text No. 202 A, 1; B, 20; cf. n. 8, above; this is the last known instance of areal activity of this deity. He is not mentioned in the "active address list" of the Tākultu ritual, cf. Franken, Tākultu (Leiden, 1954), pp. 77 ff.

\(^{1}\) (a) Dagān (cf. nn. 4 and 5 above) in Mari: G. Dossin, Studio Mariana (Leiden, 1950), p. 43, 1, 5; pp. 45 ff.; A. Malamat, VTS, XV (1966), 208–27.

\(^{12}\) (b) Itūr-Mer (cf. APNM, p. 271; n. 8), a local variant of Mer, receives equal rations with Dagān. Dossin, op. cit., p. 44, l. 6; idem, Syria, 32 (1949), 153–59; cf. Recueil Dhorme, p. 750.

(c) Dagān and Itūr-Mer (in this order, the first one being the regional, the second the local god of the city of Mari) appear together as highest divine authorities in various affairs of the Kingdom of Mari: ARM II 13:27, the asaknum of Dagān and Itūr-Mer and that of the king and his son, the governor of Mari, are safeguarding the law of the state; cf. A. Malamat, "The Dan in Mari and in the Bible" ("Biblical Essays 1968"), Proceedings of the 9th Meeting, "Die Ouest-Terrain. Werkgemeenskap in Suid-Afrika," pp. 40–49.

ARR III: 19:20, ni-il Dagān, (ii) Itūr-Mer u kēilla introduces the "trustees" of the census to their task; see also ARR VIII, Chapte II and in late OB contracts from Ḥana: ni-il (ii) Samāš, (ii) Dagān (ii) It-tar-me-er u Kōštīšuṣu šarrum in-pkû, Thureau-Dangin, JA (1909–11), 13, ll. 26–28; the same: Th. Bauer, MAOG, IV (1928–9), 4, ll. 21–23 (see there: Obv. 1. 2; PN I-din-[d]Mer-er; also: Obv. 1. 7: a-kit-il [d]Mer-er, cf. CAD, a-I, 270, 2', a'.)
Finally, it is to be stressed that PN Balumer is not a variant writing of PN Ba'alu- (=d)Im-mi/ehir,13 to whose letters EA 260 was attached by Knudtzon (cf. Section 1). The bearers of these different names are quite different persons.14

(b) Letterform and style (special characteristics).

Our group of documents are the only EA vassal letters using the royal political title lugal, šarru rabâ,15 except, significantly, a certain group of letters from Gubla and two Amurrû letters.16 Many of these use also address by the third pers. sing. as in our case: iṣbi,17 but, contrary to our letters using imqat, the following proskînesis is done in the correct first person: amqat; cf. Section II. e. It seems that the background of this special use of the royal political title šarru rabâ (by “vassals”) is based on the earliest North Syrian tradition of this title, meaning the “Great Kingship of Ḥalab”; even if in the “Amarna Age” this tradition becomes the normal political title of the kings of the equal empires, it is never used by other “vassals.” Therefore the scrives of these letters have a special common tradition.18

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13 It is true that the common feature between the two PN’s, the presence of the compound-base bÌ, is a significant general WS-attribution indicator. The reading of (d)Im as Ba’alu was recognized already by Knudtzon, see EA, p. 815, note g, p. 820, note b; cf. n. 8 above), but otherwise their construction and meaning are entirely different. While the first PN, Balumer (EA 260), is, as was stated above, an appellative DN compound PN, the second PN, Ba’alu-mi/Her (written (d)Im-mi/me-bi/ir in EA 257:3, (d)Im/me-bir in EA 258:2 and in EA 245:44 [see n. 14]; in 259:2: (d)Im/ (m)bi/ir) is a DN attributive compound name (cf. UT, 8, 65; in the Akkadian adaptation: a DN “stativic” PN). In case that the second element WS mhr (UT Glossary, 1441, WUS3, No. 1532), which thus would give the meaning of the PN as: “Bi is (a certain kind of) skilled and swift warrior,” then it is stressed that the other known examples of this name always shows presence or influence of the laryngeal /b/ (transiterated in Akkadian cuneiform by bi-/-bir), as befits a purely Canaanite-writing area; see AP N.M, pp. 229–30; Rainey, JNES, 26 (1967), 59. Even if one believes (contrary to the present writer) that Balumer and Ba’umu/Her are the same persons but that they employed two different scrives (one Canaanite and one non-Canaanite), it is very hard to see how (as with Knudtzon, but more explicitly Campbell, The Chronology of the Amarna Letters [Baltimore, 1964], p. 115, n. 15) could be the supposedly same PN containing the supposedly same divine attribute yet transcribed in the same time and in the same place in such a deeply different way. Such mixed use of scrives in the Canaanite area is unknown. Otherwise, the question is quite an academic one, because the evidence of the selected data gleaned from the Ba’alu/mi/Her letters and from our group show that Ba’alu/me/Her and Balumer are both West-Semites, but otherwise they and their scrives are of quite different background, the geographical aspect included.

14 Ba’umu/Her (EA 257–259). According to EA 245:44 (Megido) he seems to be a close follower (or even a relative) of Lab’ayu of Shekhem or, at least, culpable with similar crimes. His quite innocent personal letters (coming from the post-Lab’ayu period) are of Canaanite type (cf. Section II, e).


16 Gubla: EA, 68; 74; 76; 78; 79; 81; 89; 90; 91; 92; 105; 106; 107; Amurru: 160; 161.

17 This form seems to be inevitable when the šarru rabâ is addressed by a vassal; while in the other Amarna-letters cited, there is a (more common) combination: ana šarru rabâ umma (cf. also e.g. EA 103, Gubla), the whole unit of proskînesis is typical of the Syrian Amarna letters, see EA II, 1461; also: Ugarî–Boghazköy–Akkadian, see AHw, p. 606 a. As to imqat (1. pers. sing.), which occurs only in this group, see Section I, e.

18 On the use of the RPT lugal, gal in Ḥalab see Seux, op. cit., p. 298 and Landsberger, JCS, 8 (1954), 53, n. 89 (The Hitite declaration on the continuity of the Great Kingship inherited by them from Ḥalab); n. 90 (the use of this RPT in the Alalah-texts; only by the vassals); DrafKorn, JCS, 13 (1959), 97, n. 16; J. R. Kupper, CAH I and II (1983), Vol. II, Chap. I, pp. 32–38, cf. Kleingel, Geschichte Syriens, I (Berlin, 1965).

This use would therefore indicate that these scrives, the one of Gubla and the other of our group, transfer this special use by vassals of the RPT šarru rabâ on Pharaoh. This is not “surprising” if one remembers that other Mesopotamian royal epithets and titles were also transferred (not to speak here of the style-bound but significant variations of en-ja and bêlja); šarru rabâ, (in letters from Gubla, many times together with šarru rabâ, EA II, 1528; Seux, op. cit., p. 319); šarru rabâ (Gubla, before šarru rabâ) cf. Seux, op. cit., p. 315, n. 262.

Altogether these titles show that the scrives of the North Syrian vassals of Pharaoh sometimes succeeded in “classifying” the present status of the King of Egypt quite connectedly by their own sources of tradition and learning: in the case of šarru rabâ by connecting the tradition of North Syrian vassals with the self-styling royal political titles of their time; in the case of šarru rabâ by concluding the achievements of the Egyptian Empire with the use of the literary title (or epitheton) of the Great Akkadian King Sargon, an “international” hero, whose feats were known even in Egypt, as the presence of his epic in the Amarna Archive shows (EA 339, PÉS, XII, 193); in the case of šarru rabâ they perhaps paraphrase one of the
A further sign of this Syrian tradition is the use of the pleading expression šēzibanni (318:8, 14), “save me!” The use of this expression in the Amarna letters (and of šēzubu/šēzubu) in general is restricted to two instances: the Amurru letter No. 62 and the Rib-Addi letter No. 74 (an “iqbī” letter; cf. our note 16).\(^\text{19}\)

(c) From the grammatical features (special features):

Pers. pron. sing. 3. pers. šu-ut (317:25) (instead of šu-tū as Knudtzon): in the Amarna Archive occurs first of all in Gubla, then in Tyre and at least once in an Amurru letter.\(^\text{20}\)

(d) Selected features of orthography:

samē (260:5) samē (318:2); south to the line Akka (EA 232)—Mt. Carmel area (EA 264)—Damaseq Upi (EA 195) samē only occurs. North to this line samē occurs in Tyre only: EA 147:13; 149:7. Our group must be placed therefore along this line northeastwards.

The writing s a - g a - a z / a s (318:11) represents an extreme phonetic solution which seems to be typical to this scribe, who prefers plene writing also in DN Dagān (cf. Section I).

As to LÛ. MEŠ ḫABBĀTI following immediately after LÛ. MEŠ SA.GA.AZ EA 318:12: this is the only clear EA occurrence of this term, apart from certain problematic places: EA 299:26 (Gezer. Cf. Section I) SA.GAZ.MEŠTN which is proposed to be read ḫabbatūtum or ḫabīrītum, see Bottero, op. cit., p. 110 (already Knudtzon EA I, 50); the former reading, accepted by Von Soden in AHW, p. 304, is unacceptable to Landsberger, see apud Bottero, p. 159, who prefers to read in every context ḫapiru except in the case of Bottero, op. cit., No. 168; of CAD, H, 13 (b). (Perhaps read here ma’dūtum/u?) EA 207:21 (Canaanite letter) is also inconclusive, see EA I, 50, Bottero, op. cit., p. 105, No 134, not to speak of EA 131:16. The only “clear” appearance of this term in EA is LÛ ḫa-ba-du (EA 162:77) in the letter of Pharaoh to Amurru(!), written by a “Ḫurrian-type” scribe; cf. EA II, 1268,

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19 The pleading expression šēzibanni connects Letter 318 with a certain specific political usage (MB) of the (separate) verb šēzubu/šēzubu (cf. CAD, E s.v. šēzubu, semantic Section 6, p. 424, discussion p. 426); referring to the activating of the military aid promised to the vassals in certain pressing situations or at least expected by them in their position (it is quite interesting to note that this usage “develops” from OB Mari). Now this expression, used only in (North) Syria toward northern (Great) Kings, is addressed to Pharaoh (see also Section II, e). This applicative “change over” is also a typical stylistic indicator of the political situation in Syria in the “Amarna Age,” see Arzt, “Vox populi” in the Amarna Tablets, RA, 58 (1964), 159–66; this factor was unfortunately overlooked in Buccellati, Cities and Nations of Ancient Syria (Roma, 1967)—(for semantically borrowed šēzib in Aramaic see LVT, 1129).

20 For šūt, see EA II 1527; Albright–Moran, JCS, IV (1950), 167–68 (to EA 89:38, 50, Gubla); Labat, L’Akkadien de Boghaz-koï (Bordeaux, 1932), pp. 56, 217; apart from the Gubla occurrences, see for Tyre: 154:9 (= 155:45); Amurru: 67:16 (šu-u-tū; = 164:29); also, Qatna: 55:4, 7, 52, 59. Our case belongs to those represented by the Old-Assyrian and Hittite–Akkadian examples.
Helck, Beziehungen, pp. 467–68. The only Palestinian occurrence of the verb ḫabāṭu is in EA 286:56, one of the Jerusalem letters whose special position is well known. On the other hand this term (and verb) is well known in original Akkadian texts, (Boghazköi–Akkadian included). Thus the appearance of ḫabāṭu with its synchronically factual “pair” LÚ SA.GA.AZ shows the roots of the scribe of our group in good Mesopotamian tradition: this is a canonized “pair” in lexical texts, cf. CAD, H, 13. In our actual case, however, it is not difficult to decide that LÚ.MEŠ ḫabāṭu does not translate LÚ.MEŠ SA.GA.AZ because (a) ḫabāṭu is placed by the determinative; cf. also the dictum of Landsberger cited above; (b) because a further quality of our group: the disuse of the so-called “Glossenkeil”; thus we have in 317:21: LÚ MAŠKÍM ḫa-za-ni-ka. This (unique) pairing shows the system of equation of our scribe, omitting the second LÚ. (The omitting of the “Glossenkeil” in itself is not a characteristic quality, cf. Böhl, Sprache, p. 13, g.).

Therefore EA 318:11 and 12 are to be kept apart (cf. Section II, h); for the disuse of the “Glossenkeil” see also 318:7: šu qa-ti).

(e) For the evaluation of the data presented in Section II, a, b, c, and d as the “profile” of our group, it is important to note that there are only a few signs of Canaanite or Ḫurrian influence in it. The “confused” forms imqut, etc. (cf. Section II, b) as 1. pers. sing. præt. are to be treated as analogous formations generally typical of peripheric-Akkadian.

Canaanite influence can be detected in šemū ana PN (EA 317:17, 24) and in the uses of the copula ṹ; see W. L. Moran, A Syntactical Study of the Dialect of Byblos (Baltimore, 1950), pp. 15 ff.; 17 (A, 5).

As to the possibility of Ḫurrian influence (aside, perhaps, from the place-name, see note 29 and Section III), we have: i-te, 260:16; 317:25. This writing, with the normal value of de₄, occurs first in old-Babylonian Mari (by “Ḥurrian” scribes) and spreading everywhere in (“Ḥurrian”-influenced) peripheric-Akkadian becomes a normal feature here, used sometimes also in (bordering) Canaanite letters, see e.g. in Tyre, cf. EA II 1420–21. Without doubt, this writing is especially typical of the Syrian Amarna letters.

The same situation prevails in the uses of the preposition in: idū ana PN, (w)ašābu ana PN Pl. N: for the diffusion of the latter see EA II 1374, showing clearly a mixed area background in Syria. As for idū ana PN see EA II 1420–21; this usage seems to be also an areal one.

A most instructive indicator for areal delineation comes from the comparison of the uses of the verbal expressions synonymous to šeṣibanni (see Section II, b). In Palestine we have ekēmu and in one instance eṭēru.

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22 Labat, L’Akkadien de Boghaz-köi (Bordeaux, 1932), pp. 66–67; other prefix-confusions, equally typical to Canaanite and non-Canaanite periphery-Akkadian, are those appearing in the prefix of “e”-containing verbs and in the final vowels, as in our group iš-miše (etc.), EA 260:8; 317:12 (etc.); see material in Böhl, Sprache, pp. 54–55. (The original, “non-confused” basis of the first phenomenon occurs as a norm in MB; see Aro, Studien zur MB Grammatik [Helsinki, 1955], p. 72.) Similarly, for “confusions” in verbs belonging to the II group of Verba Prim. Aleph as i-pu-ul, EA 317:18, see Labat, Böhl, loc. cit. (For a much earlier view, no more acceptable in its original definition, see Recueil Dhorne [1913–1914], p. 417).


24 See also Labat, op. cit., p. 100.

25 See for eṭēru in Amarna documents see EA II 1407 (1); EA 121:40 (Gubla); Landsberger apud Bottero, Ḫabiru, p. 110, No. 148 (= EA 299:22, Gazer).
(f) **Paleography.**

The Chart (Appendix II) is intended to convey a general impression on the placement of our group.

Not shown here are the two signs copied by Knudtzon from EA 260:13 (cf. Section I and note 3): 𒈹 (ki[i/?]). The form of 𒈹 is identical with the forms of 𒈹 in EA 148:42 and EA 151:55 (Tyre). See Knudtzon, *Autographs, EA*, pp. 1001 ff.; *Aut.* 108 (=148:42); 110 (=151:55); 145 (=260:13). At first, Knudtzon read these signs as kar (cf. also BA 4 [1899], 321), but it is to be pointed out that he already proposed to improve it to 𒈹, bit(u), see EA 1321 (𒈹dī = bi-ti[i/?]; this is the independent reading of Albright also, see JEA, 23 (1937), 203 concerning EA 151:55. This reading was confirmed by the collation of Gadd, see Liverani, *Storia di Ugarit* (Roma, 1962), p. 29.

(g) **Geographical placement.**

In 1916 A. Alt proposed the identification of our only place-name *ti-en-ni* (260:14; collation at present impossible: cf. Section I) with Egyptian Ti-ān-ni (Helek’s transliteration), one of the place-names mentioned in Papyrus Petersburg, 1116 A, Recto. 26 This pre-Amarna list of rations for *marjannū* from *Sa-ḥi*, stationed in Memphis as envoy-mentions, according to the observation of Aharoni, important centers situated in the valleys of Palestine, along the pharaonic strategic highway, the northernmost clearly identifiable being Ḥaṣūr. 27 But because *Sa-ḥi* includes, already in the inscriptions of Thutmose III, 28 also Phoenicia and the Lebanon area (and later on even further far-northern territories) in Syria, the observation of Aharoni is good for the Lebanon Valley also (“Amqā/i”). This general placement of *ti-en-ni* 29 in that area is a minimum demand, enforced now by the philological observations presented in this paper, showing the logical placement of the whole group in the Syrian area along the line “Gubla”–“Amurru”–“Dameseq” (Section III).

(h) **The Suteans.**

While the concrete geographical data are meager (see Section III), the position of the Suteans 30 in 318:13 could serve as a general directional indicator for the positioning of our group. The sender of this letter, stationed also in *ti-en-ni* or at least very near to it, has the rare opportunity of distinguishing correctly all the disturbing social and demographic factors of the Syrian (–Palestinian) area: the (urbanized) s a g a z “rebels”, the prowling ḥabbātu worker-gangs and the desert nomads, the sutā. Such a situation is conceivable only along the eastern borderland of Syria (see *Idrīmī*, 13–15; PRU III pp. 7–8; EA 169:25), meaning the “desert” areas in the general direction of the Euphrates. Here we have a direct continuation of information on the Sutean activity described by Aššuruballiṭ I, (EA 16) adding information about the necessary counter-measures (cf. *Chronicle P*, I 6 ff.).

29 So far no suitable location can be offered. Cf. e.g. material treated lately by Astour, *JNES*, 22 (1963), 220–41. While Boru offered a quite unacceptable solution (relation with danānu) in *Die alten Ortsnamen Palastinas* (Leipzig, 1930), p. 31, it seems that this is not a Semitic Pl. N. but a *Hurrian* one, to be “normalized” as *Teg-en-ni*? (Cf. Landsberger, *JCS*, 8 [1954], 60, n. 111 and “OIP,” 57, 210); perhaps we should understand that *Balumari* sits in the ancestral “house” of T. (originally) a *marjannū*; thus, T. would be a PN used as Pl. N. as “bit T,” the House of T.? Cf. Section III.
Thus, by putting our group in its proper place we are rewarded now with a continuous and consistent picture of a border-situation (with wild Suteans), contrasting the continuing picture which emerges from some further data from inland (with pacified, serving Suteans): EA 122:34 (Suteans in Egyptian service, cf. EA II, 1222) and especially EA 195:29, where the able, popular, and semper fidelis Governor, Birjawaza, reports to Pharaoh his readiness at the head of his army, which includes s a g a z and Suteans (cf. also in the pre-Amarna Ta‘anaq letters, No. 3, rev. 4).

The Gezer Letter 297 (l. 16; cf. Section I) is the only Palestinian Amarna document mentioning (perhaps!) the Suteans. The meaning of the passage in itself is still obscure but it seems, taking the presence of the Suteans for granted, that the local prince simply (or to be more correct, metaphorically) complains about expenses or damages caused by the presence of the Sutean troops.

III. Conclusions

While the exact geographical location of the “send-off” pointed for our group of EA Documents 260, 317, and 318 remains for the time being unidentified it seems clear that we have rediscovered the correspondence fragment of a border station of the Egyptian Empire in Syria. This station must be situated on the highway leading northeastwards, parallel to the Canaanite–Phoenician coastal area, in the general direction of North–Syria–Euphrates, and on the fringe of the desert. The “pair” Balumer–Dagantakala (relationship unknown) demands nearness to ancient Mesopotamian–Amorite (Syrian) cultic centers.

The type of the peripheric-Akkadian of the letters and their script (“andere Formen”!) stresses also that this geographical point must be found as north-northeastwards (in the neighborhood of the Orontes(!)–Euphrates area) as the geopolitical situation makes it possible.

Finally, the comparison of the conclusions presented here with those of C. Epstein in JEA, 49 (1963), 53, on the identification and location of Place Name ti-en-ni, shows convincingly their converging accuracy.

(On the eve of the eightieth anniversary of the discovery of the Amarna Archive, may these observations be received as a festal contribution.)
APPENDIX I

Texts

EA 260, uncopied! ("Oppert-tablet")

EA 317 VAS XI, 177

O1. a-na LUGAL.GAL be-li-ia
2. (1) Ba-lu-mi-ir/mé-er* iq-bi
3. 7-šu ú(!) 7-šu-ma
4. a-na 2 GİR(!) LUGAL.GAL
5. (d)UTU a(!)-na sa-me im(!)-qú-ut
6. a-na-ku ke-e/ki-i-15* i-ga-bi
7. LUGAL.GAL be-li
8. a-na(!)<ku*<ši-me a-wa-ti
9. ša LUGAL.GAL be-li-ia
10. (d) UTU a-na sa-me
11. LUGAL.GAL i-te/de₄*
12. a-na ēr-šu

R13. ú a-na-ku a-na é(!) (KI[?])
14. ti-en-ni u-ša-ab
15. ú LUGAL.GAL be-li-ia
16. li-i-te/de₄* a-na ēr-šu

EA 318 BB 74; Collated

O1. a-na LUGAL.GAL be-li-[ia]
2. (d)UTU a-na ša-mi/mé
3. (1)(d) Da-ga-an-ta-ka-[la]
4. ēr-ka iq-bi
5. 7-šu ú 7-šu-ma
6. a-na 2 GİR LUGAL.GAL
7. be-li-ia im-qú-ut
8. še-zi-ba-an-ni
9. iš-tu KUR.MEŠ da-<an-nu>-[ti]
10. iš-tu šu qa-ti
11. LÚ.MEŠ SA.GA.A [Z.MES(?)]
12. LÚ.MEŠ ḫa-ba-ti
13. ú LÚ.MEŠ šu-ti-i
14. ú še-zi-ba-<an>-ni
15. LUGAL.GAL be-li-ia¹

R16. ³¹
17. ³¹
18. ú at-t'[a]³ LUGAL.GAL
19. be-li-ia
20. tu-še-zi-ba-an-ni
21. ú i-na-ba-a. a't(!)*
22. a-na LUGAL.GAL be-li-[ia]

³¹ 318:16, 17; see EA I, Autogr. 168 (p. 1007).

* Collations of Knudtzon

! Improvements by P.A.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(EA 318) BB 74, collated</th>
<th>(EA 317) VAS XI, 177</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lugal</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
<td>Zeichenliste nr. 81: &quot;Andere Formen&quot;; cf. VAS XI, 79:5 (= EA 146, Tyre); VAS XI 81:1 (= EA 156, Amurru); but see also BB 81, EA 277:9, unplaced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
<td>![Image]</td>
<td>Zeichenliste nr. 23: Gubla, Sidon.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Zeichenliste = VAS XII, p. 75 ff.*